

**WASHINGTON** - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell released the following statement in reaction to President Barack Obama's State of the Union speech.

The most important issue we face in Arizona and across the country is strengthening our economy and creating jobs. We need a serious, bipartisan effort to reduce the deficit and reduce taxes. What we don't need is more partisan bickering. Democrats and Republicans need to work on solutions that will lift our country up, get folks back to work and get our fiscal house in order.

I appreciate the call for a spending freeze, but it is going to take more. Congress also needs to cut spending and retain key tax cuts that will spur growth and create jobs. Since my arrival to Congress, I've worked in a bipartisan way to make recent cuts to capital gains and estate taxes cuts permanent. I sincerely hope that this year, with the cuts about to expire, our plea will not fall on deaf ears.

As former mayor and state senator, I've never voted for a budget that wasn't balanced, and have voted against every Democratic budget since coming to Congress. It is my hope to see real fiscal restraint when the budget is presented, including spending cuts and the extension of these key middle-class tax cuts.